The SJ CSRA CC now meets at the MieStelle Bakery on the first Thursday of the Month

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Volume 25, No. 1 **the Stephen James CSRA Coin Club, Founded in 2001 Monthly Newsletter** **January, 2026**

The Challenge of Collecting Complete U.S. Coin Type Sets, No. 1

2026 Club Meeting Schedule

Jan. 8	Apr. 2	July 2	Oct. 1
Feb. 5	May 7	Aug. 6	Nov. 5
Mar. 5	June 4	Sept. 3	**Dec. 3**

Collecting Sets of Dr aped Bust and Classic Head Half-Cents

This is a "biggie", so be patient!

An 1800 Draped Bust Half-cent graded VF-30
(Enlarge the page to 150 to 200% to better-view each coin]

It was Alexander Hamilton who back in 1792 suggested the coining of the half-cent because Americans could use it along with the large cent for a variety of items such as inexpensive goods or to make change. The first U.S. Half-cents of the United states were coined from 1793 thru 1797 with the **Flowing Hair design** but are more difficult to acquire than those struck from 1800 which were called the Draped Bust type. Examples graded above XF-40 were well beyond the author's financial resources so the half-cent dates shown in this article range from Very Good-8 to only XF-40.

The 1800 dated example shown above had a mintage of 202,908 and is fairly common. This type were produced by our first chief Engraver Robert Scott from 1800 thru 1808--except in 1801--in larger enough numbers for one to complete a Draped Bust 1/2 set.

An 1802/0 Draped bust half-cent C-2, R4 graded VG-8 by Anacs

The author acquired the 1802/0 half-cent ***with Anacs papers*** back in May 1989 at a major New Jersey coin show. This was the very beginning of modern type grading. The coin had a mintage of only 20,266 and is scarce today. It displays the reverse of 1802 and while it is more common than the reverse of 1800, it is still considered quite rare today and worth a lot more than it cost the collector him in back 1989.

An 1803 Draped Bust half-cent C1, R2 graded Fine-12
by Tom Reynolds, a major EAC specialist

The 1803 Draped Bust half-cent had a mintage of just 92,000 compared to the 202,908 struck in 1900 but is more available than the 1802/1. The coin was acquired by the writer at the F.U.N. Show held in Orlando, FL back in January, 2004 at a reasonable price and has not increased very much since he bought it.

An 1804 Draped Bust half-cent. C-10, R1 graded XF-40
Also by Tom Reynolds

The 1804 Draped Bust half cent was acquired at the same Orlando Show held back in January 2004 but is in a much higher grade because the reported mintage for this date was 1,005,312 and is the most common date of the entire Draped Bust half cent series. Today, it is only slightly more expensive, so it is easier to acquire.

An 1805 Draped Bust half-cent, C-4 R2 graded VF-35

The 1805 Half-cent had a mintage of 814,465 so it should be the most common date of the series.. The writer acquired the coin at the FUN Show held back in 2002, the first one he and his wife, Vilma had ever attended. The coin looks a lot better than similar graded examples the writer has seen and is fairly easy to acquire despite the more than two decades since the author acquired his example.

(Continued on page 2, column one)

Collecting a Date Set of early U.S. Half-Cents

(Continued from page 1, column 2)

An 1806 Draped Bust Half-cent , C-1, R1 graded VF -25 by Tom Reynolds

At the same Fun Show held back in January 2002, the writer also acquired the 1806 Draped Bust half-cent from dealer Tom Reynolds. According to Roger S . Cohen, Jr., author of "American Half – Cents", 2nd nEdition published in 1982, the 1806 Half-cent Variety #1 actually was the same die variety as those struck in 1804 and 1805 because it has a Stemless wreath on the reverse. When enlarged sufficiently, say 200% or even as much as 500%, the reverse shows that "a flaw which originally appeared on the 1804 and 1805 half cents using the same die was now displaying rust pits on the entire reverse, and a reported flaw from the earlier two dates using the same die had now almost completely disappeared due to the die's wear and the wreath. At first, the writer failed to noticed the lower center of his coin to reflect such minor problems but upon enlargement the reverse appears slightly darkened compared to the obverse.

An 1807 Draped Bust Half-cent, C-1 R2 graded Fine-15

The writer acquired the 1807 Draped Bust half-cent away back in n December 1988 while attending a meeting of the Ocean County Coin Club which was fairly close to the Atlantic ocean in central New Jersey. While graded only Fine-15, the coin still appears attractive displaying most of its artistic aspects evenly with the reverse side especially clear to the viewer. The 1807 issue had only one die variety for the obverse while using the third die variety from the 1806 half-cent. Back then the coin sold for only $60.00. Today it is worth double that, possibly more depending on the coin's eye appeal. Oddly, these coins despite being in displayed in the lower numismatic grades still display attractive specimens.

An 1808 Draped Bust half-cent graded, C-3, R2+ graded *Choice* VF

An 1808/7 Draped Bust Half-Cent, C-2, R7 graded just VG-10 by PCGS

The writer acquired this example of the 1808/7 half-cent at another FUN Show held in Orlando, Florida back in January 2013. Even at 500%,the reader will find it difficult to view the subtle changes from the normal dated C-3 example which is fairly common as shown atop of the 1808/7 on column one.. The overdate, 1808/7 barely shows the top of the second 8 over the 7. The coin was knocked around during its more than two centuries of existence making it difficult for the reader to observe clearly the differences between the C-1 over date and the C-2 example shone above.

The Capped bust Half-Cents of 1809 thru 1811

An 1809 Classic Head half-cent, C-6, R1 graded XF-45

In 1807, John Reich became the Asst. Chief Engraver to Robert Scot but actually was hired to create a brand new type of U.S. coins which became known as the Capped Bust types . His first copper coins that replaced Scot's Draped Bust types were called the Classic Head types however which were first struck in 1808 for the Large Cent and in 1809 for the half-cent; the coin type shown directly above.

The reported mintage for Reich's 1809 half-cent was 1,154,572, a record for that time. The writer acquired the specimen shown above at the New Egypt Coin Club show located in central New Jersey held away back in April 1986 a year before third party grading began and the dealer who sold it graded the piece only VF -20 when it looks more like an XF-45.. In any event, the coin while extremely common appears very attractive.

An 1809 over Inverted 9, C5, R1 half-cent graded VF-20

An 1810 Classic Head Half–cent, C-1, R2 graded Fine-12
(Enlarge the page to 150 to 200% to better-view each coin]

The 1810 Classic Head half-cent had a reported mintage of 215,000 with only one die variety. It was unevenly struck with six stars on the right side of the obverse being weaker than the seven stars on the left side of the coin. The author acquired the coin shown directly above from a New York City coin dealer back on January 2nd in 1986 and it cost him only $25.00. That's half a century ago as this is being written. Today one similarly graded retails for $285 in the 2026 Red Book but only $185 according to PCGS' COINFACTS. There are many more attractive higher graded examples that appear better than the example shone above and are worth checking out in the author's opinion since he was a novice collector around the time he purchased this coin.

Collecting a Date Set of early U.S. Half-Cents

(Continued from page 2, column 2)

An 1811 Classic Head Half–cent, C-2, R3 graded –VG-8
(Enlarge the page to 150 to 200% to better-view each coin]

By the time the Mint was about to produce the 1811 dated half-cent, the financial situation the U.S. Mint was undergoing difficulty due to the lack of copper. Add the fact that the United States and Great Britain were nearing the War of 1812 which made it more difficult for the U.S. Mint to acquire planchets from Mathew Boulton's Factory in Birmingham, England so only 63,140 half-cents were struck in 1811 before the coin denomination was suspended. As a result the 1811 half-cent is a difficult coin to acquire in all grades due to its low mintage.

An 1825 Classic Head, C-2, R2 half-cent graded AU -50
(Enlarge the page to 150 to 200% to better-view each coin]

Rumor has it that Baltimore businessmen in 1825 encouraged the U.S. Mint to create half-cents once again, so some 63,000 were struck. That was 143 less than the rare 1811 half-cents yet the coin is one of the most common of the series and the most afford able in the higher grades up to that time. This is the second of the two die varieties because the curl of Miss Liberty on the obverse appears between **the 2 and the 5 instead of just under the 5 which is on Variety 1.**

An 1826 Classic head Half-cent, C-1, R1 graded AU-53
(Enlarge the page to 150 to 200% to better-view each coin]

In 1826, 234,000 half-cents were struck at the Philadelphia mint and considered a common date. It is only slightly more expensive than the 1825 and somewhat affordable up to AU-55 for the middle class collector.

Only two die varieties were struck that year as well with the Variety 1 displaying **the second S in States on the reverse slightly further out under the wreath. (See above!) while on the 2nd variety, not shown, the S appears directly under the wreath.** The coin in the AU-53 grade shown was not all that expensive for a middle class collector depending on one's resources and the writer found it to be fairly attractive compared to the many earlier dated examples shown on pages 1 and 2.The irony of the continuous circulation of the later date half-cents they were not used a s much in commerce although they were used to make change with the Latin American coinage when necessary.

The three die varieties of the 1828 Classic head half-cents
(Enlarge the page to 150 to 200% to better-view each coin]

The 1828 Draped Bust Half-cent had a reported mintage of 600,000 coins so it is one of the more common dates of the series. There were three die varieties produced with the first two, scarce overdates; the most popular one with only five stars instead of six on the right side of the obverse shown above the two die varieties wit h seven stars on the left and the correct six stars at the right on the obverse. Why did the author acquire all three varieties when he already had two; the one atop and the other at right? The reverse of the coin at the lower right of the three displays all thirteen stars with the leaf directly under the second S on the wreath on the reverse while the scarcest variety of the three the S is slightly to the right under the wreath. Incidentally, the author acquired the 1828 half-cent shown on the lower left from the late Jim Barry, one of the four members who started our club.

An 1829 Classic Head half-cent, C-1, R1 graded AU-50
Enlarge the page to 150 to 200% to better-view each coin]

The 1829 Classic Head half-cent had a reported mintage by the Philadelphia Mint of 487,000, the second largest of the series yet it was struck with only one die variety and is considered another fairly common date which serious collectors will have no difficulty acquiring.. He acquired the coin back in November 1988 for just $70.00. A recent Stacks–Bowers auction held in January 2025 a specimen in the same grade as the coin above sold for $264. The writer was able to compared his example with the January, 2025 one and found the latter to lack eye appeal. (A coin is usually first graded by how much is left on it. If it has eye appeal, some graders will tag it as such.

During the early years of the author's involvement with Numismatics, he was mostly interested in collecting early U.S. copper coinage which included the Large cent as well as the half-cent. Many of the more knowledgeable coin club members a s well as sellers during the 1980s and 1990s were members of the **EAC** which stands ***for Early American Coppers Club*** that in the author's opinion included the more sophisticated numismatists of that era, so most of the U.S. coins that interested him were the ones coined in the late 18th and early 19th century during the decade last decade of the 20th century were the earlier copper coinage produced in the early 1800s of the 19h century were either half-cents or Large cents of which there were plenty of both but not many graded above XF-40

(Continued on page 4, column one)

Collecting a Date Set of early U.S. Half-Cents

(Continued from page 3, column 2)

An 1831 Electrotype example of the rare Classic Head half-cent
(Enlarge the page to 150 to 200% to better-view each coin]

In 1831, the U.S. Mint claimed that 2,200 coins were struck that year but Roger S, Cohen Jr. in his second edition of ***American Half-Cents, "The Little Half-S***isters" published in 1982, questions whether even that many half-cents were released that year.

The author acquired what appears to be a coin shown directly above from a highly knowledgeable numismatist in June 1991 who specialized in early American coppers informing him from the start that he had **an electro version** of the rare 1831 Classic Head half-cent. By then, he was well aware of the 1831 dated half-cent's extremely low mintage and rarity. so it was not surprising that when he was offered an electro example priced at $250.00 he decided to add it to his collection.

An electrotype coin uses both the obverse and reverse of a real coin onto a planchet that when concluded almost looks like the original one but it isn't.

From the Newman Numismatic Portal, "Often the seam where the two sides are joined is the most obvious evidence to identify an electrotype. Other diagnostic evidence is the difference in weight between the original and the electrotype (the original being heavier) yet electro types--due to their attractiveness--sell fairly well in the numismatic market because both the seller and the buyer knows that the actual coin is virtually impossible to acquire let alone afford it."

An 1832 Classic head half-cent, C-2, R1 graded AU-53
(Enlarge the page to 150 to 200% to better-view each coin]

In 1832 the reported mintage was 51,000. There were three die varieties produced by the Philadelphia Mint of which the coin shown was the second. Variety 1 was only slightly scarcer than either Variety 2 and 3, so the coin shown above is considered a common date. The writer obtained the example for only $60.00.away back in January, 1989. According to PCGS' COINFACTS' the current retail for the date is $275 .

An 1833 Classic head half-cent, C-1, R1 graded AU-50
(Enlarge the page to 150 to 200% to better-view each coin]

In 1833 there was only one die variety with 103,00 half-cents struck and is considered a common date. It cost only $50 in 1994. Today; it retails for $200.00.

An 1834 Classic Head half-cent, C-1, R1 graded AU-55
(Enlarge the page to 150 to 200% to better-view each coin]

In 1834, only one die variety was struck of the Classic Head half–cent again as by this time less die varieties were required due to the improved Screw press. In that year some 141,000 were produced by the Philadelphia Mint and the coin is considered a common date. The example shown is fairly attractive with an excellent strike. The author has checked his later date Classic Head half-cents with those seen in similar grades on PCGS's COINFACTS and some have more eye appeal than those put into recent auctions.

The fact that so many high graded Classic Head half-cents exist indicates that by the late 1820s and early 1830s, the need for the denomination was beginning to acquire less use. Nevertheless, the coin continued to be struck for circulation which is why many of these late dates arte still available in the grades shown in this article as well as in uncirculated condition at reasonable prices today.

An 1835 Classic Head Half-cent C-1, R1 graded MS-64 by NGC
(Enlarge the page to 150 to 200% to better-view each coin]

In 1992, The author came across this lovely Classic Head half-cent example which was sold as an MS-63 for $300. He decided some years later to send it out for professional grading and it came back in MS-64 by NGC. Enlarged to 200% the coin is quite brilliant and displays the artistry of the engravers of this period. It is by far the finest of his Classic head half-cents. Back in May 2024 an 1835, C-1 variety Classic Head half-cent example in the same grade as the coin shown above cost the winning at a Stacks/Bowers auction $900.

An 1836 Electrotype Proof Classic Head Half-Cent graded MS-62
(Enlarge the page to 150 to 200% to better-view each coin]

While attending a major Coin show in northern New Jersey, back in 1995, the writer came across another Electro type rarity of a 1836 proof only Classic Head half-cent, the final year in which only a small legitimate numbers are known before the Classic Head half-cent series finally came to an end. He acquired the unusual specimen ford a small price from an early American Copper salesman whom he had bought legitimate early large cent coins before and since this not only ended the Classic Head half-cent series first struck in 1809, no half-cents would be struck again for circulation until 1849.

What is amazing for the collector is that he was able on a middle class budget to achieve this collection, but then, most of the coins he acquired were in circulated grades.

(Continued on page 5, column 1)

MINUTES FROM OUR ANNUAL CHRISTMAS DINNER
Thursday, December 4, 2025

The club enjoyed our annual Christmas dinner in place of the December meeting. We had an excellent turnout of4 23 members and several guests for the dinner, more than in recent years. Thanks to Sharon Smoot for coordinating reservations and other details, JJ Engel for reserving the Columbus Club, and Typhany Nordeen for acquiring and wrapping the gifts we all enjoyed.

Willie Simon offered the blessing for the food and Jim Mullaney distributed gifts to the members.

The contests for guessing the number of pennies and nickels in the containers were surprisingly tight –Chrissy Kuhl won the penny jar with a guess of 350 (356 pennies were in) and Glenn Sanders won the nickel jar with a guess of 485 (488 nickels in jar).

Thanks once again to the Columbus Club for hosting another enjoyable event for our club.

Respectfully submitted,
Jim Mullaney, Secretary

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